

Wednesday, September 10, 1980 • 8:00 p.m.

Bicentennial Blues

HOLLYWOOD
Ernest Fleischmann,
General Director
JAZZ BOWL
AT THE BOWL

In order of appearance:

BIG JOE TURNER
LLOYD GLENN
QUARTET
MUDDY WATERS

Intermission

BIG MAMA
THORNTON
AND TRIO
B.B. KING

Benny Powell, Host

Baldwin is the official piano of Jazz at the Bowl.
KK-GO, 105 FM, the official jazz station for Jazz at the Bowl.



BIG JOE TURNER was born in Kansas City, Missouri, May 18, 1911. As a youngster he earned pennies dancing and singing, while leading a blind guitarist around Kansas City. His work caught the attention of the manager of a club called the "Hole In The Wall." At age 13, Joe began his professional career as a blues singer. Later, when he was 19, Joe went to work as a bartender at the Sunset Club. He teamed up with Pete Johnson, considered the greatest "boogie" piano player of all time. Together Joe Turner and Pete Johnson made the Sunset Club one of the most popular spots in Kansas City, and soon the duo was off to New York City, where they were booked to play Carnegie Hall. That was in 1938, and from that point on Big Joe Turner had all the recording dates and tours that he could handle. He worked at Cafe Society, recorded with Joe Sullivan, Art Tatum, Pete Johnson and others, and toured in Europe.

After a brief lull in his career, Turner re-emerged in the early 1950's with his recording of *Chains of Love*. He was soon a top-selling rhythm and blues artist for Atlantic Records and he has remained one of the most prominent blues artists on the international concert scene over the past several decades.



Pianist **LLOYD GLENN** has just returned from a tour of Europe, where he is a great favorite as a blues artist. During his long career, the Texas-born musician has worked and recorded with B.B. King, Lowell Fulson, Kid Ory and Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown. Glenn's most recent albums were recorded in France on the Black and Blue label.

The artist describes his beginnings as follows:

"I was born 21st November, 1909, at San Antonio, Texas. I started struggling with the piano at the age of

2½ or 3 years. To get on the piano stool was my toughest job! The rest, I mean *playing the piano*, came easy... I had my first professional engagement at the age of 19 in 1928, in the band directed by saxophonist Millard McNeal. We appeared in San Antonio under the name of McNeal's Melody Boys. Feeling that I would like to make myself better known to the public, I left this local group in 1930 in company with drummer Joe Lewis to go to Dallas, Texas, a town where musicians had more chance of making a name for themselves. We soon had an engagement in the big band of trumpeter Terrence Holder. I was responsible for writing many of the arrangements which we played.

"In 1932 Terrence Holder was forced to disband the orchestra and I returned to my native town where I received a proposition from trumpeter Boots Douglas and his Buddies. This excellent big band, as well as playing at San Antonio, had a well-established reputation throughout the state of Texas and between 1935 and 1938 recorded a series of discs for the Bluebird label. In 1934 I left Boots and returned to Dallas to join the big orchestra which bassist Nat Towles had just formed. But I only stayed with this band during the summer months of 1934.

"At that time trumpeter Don Albert, who played regularly at Shadowland in San Antonio, was making several changes in the line-up and he engaged me as pianist as well as arranger. When engagements became infrequent in San Antonio the orchestra toured the South-East, the East, the South and the Midwest where there was more chance of regular work. Our group was a cooperative band and each one of us tried to play his best in order to consolidate the reputation of the orchestra. In November 1936, we were fortunate enough to be invited to the Vocalion studios in San Antonio and one of my arrangements, *Deep Blue Melody* was recorded at that session. At the end of 1937, so many musicians had left the group that Don Albert had to disband. From 1939 to 1942 I worked in San Antonio and at the same time as Music Director of the Jazz Unit and on Works Progress Administration.

"The year 1942 was a decisive one in my career, for I left my native town to look for a more pleasant locale and reached California. I installed myself in Los Angeles and became Magna Flux Inspector at the Douglas Aircraft Company. In the summer of 1944 I got an engagement in the Walter Johnson trio at the Waikiki in Hollywood. Our group was completed by bassist Frank Dandridge. In 1945 I returned to Los Angeles to play and record with trumpeter Red Mack Morris, James Peterson (tenor sax), Marshall Hicks (bass) and Leroy Stewart (drums). In 1947 I joined the group led by vocalist and guitarist T-Bone Walker. From 1949 to 53 I was part of the Dixieland band of veteran trombonist Kid Ory and made many records with this group. In 1953 I had the chance of forming my own trio with Billy Hadnott and Bob Harvey and I kept this trio together until 1956. Finally in 1960 and 1962 the famous guitarist B.B. King called on me to accompany him for two LPs."



MUDDY WATERS is one of the most imitated electric blues artists of all time. Tunes like *Got My Mojo Working*, *Mannish Boy*, *I'm Your Hoochie Coochie Man*, *Trouble No More*, *You Can't Lose What You Ain't Never Had*, *Long Distance Call*, *I Can't Be Satisfied*, *Rollin' Stone* and scores of others have been recorded by artist after artist.

Born McKinley Morganfield on April 4, 1915 in Rolling Fork, Mississippi, Muddy Waters is in a direct line of descent from the great blues singers of the Mississippi delta cotton farming area in which he was raised. His mother died young so his father sent him to be raised by his grandmother on a plantation near Clarksdale. It was she who tagged him with his name.

In the early days of performing, when he was playing harmonica, Muddy's popularity boosted him from 50 cents a night (plus a fish sandwich and a half pint of moonshine) when he was 13, to \$18 with another \$10 thrown in for the sidemen for a night's work, which more often than not, was from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. during the 30's.

At 17, he began playing the guitar, influenced by and imitating the "bottleneck" style of older semilegendary delta primitives Eddie "Son" House and Robert Johnson. In his earliest recordings, made for the Library of Congress in 1941-42, he revealed himself a master of the fierce, insinuating and rhythmically complex guitar accompaniment centered around his striking bottleneck playing. His early commercial recordings were responsible for lending vigor and passion, as well as a direction, to the then emerging postwar blues styles.

In 1954 came the legendary *Rollin' Stone* (also known as *Catfish Blues*). Acknowledgements surrounding this song include the inspiration of Bob Dylan's *Like A Rolling Stone* and the names of both a major English rock group and an American consumer guide to the rock culture. It is acknowledged that the late Jimi Hendrix taught himself to play guitar by listening to Muddy's records.

With the release of his first Blue Sky (CBS) album, *Hard Again*, a brand new chapter in the history-making career of Muddy Waters opened up. Produced by Johnny Winter, *Hard Again* featured a superb band composed of Muddy, Johnny, James Cotton, Charles Calmese (of Cotton's band) and Muddy's musicians, "Pinetop" Perkins, Bob Margolin and Willie "Big Eyes" Smith. Waters' second Blue Sky album followed the next

year. *I'm Ready* was produced by Johnny Winter, who again played guitar along with Muddy. The Waters' musicians were supplemented this time by Waters' regular harpist Jerry Portnoy, as well as Big Walter Horton on harp and Jimmy Rogers on guitar, with Horton and Rogers reuniting with Muddy for the first time since the late 1950's. Since the release of *I'm Ready*, Muddy Waters has been touring extensively. Throughout 1978 he criss-crossed the U.S. before concluding the year in Europe opening a large hall tour for Eric Clapton. The following spring Muddy again joined Clapton for a 47-city tour of the U.S.

On August 9, 1978, Muddy Waters made a guest appearance at the annual White House Staff picnic hosted by President and Mrs. Carter. At that time, President Carter was prompted to address the gathering about Muddy's contribution to American music and culture: "As you know, Muddy Waters is one of the great performers of all time," he said. "He's won more awards than I could name. His music is well known around the world, comes from a good part of the country, and represents accurately the background and history of the American people."

Muddy's newest release for Blue Sky is an entirely live album, recorded on his 1977 and 1978 national tours. *Muddy "Mississippi" Waters Live* contains versions of his more exciting and enduring songs, among them one of Muddy's favorites by another master, Sonny Boy Williamson's *Nine Below Zero* and a familiar hit he co-wrote with Bo Diddley and Mel London, *Mannish Boy*.



WILLIE MAE "BIG MAMA" THORNTON was born in 1926 in Montgomery, Alabama. Her father was a minister and her mother a gospel singer. At the age of 14, shortly after the death of her mother, Big Mama left home to join Sam Green's Hot Harlem Review, based in Atlanta; she toured with the group until 1948. She then settled in Houston, where she taught herself to play drums and harmonica.

Big Mama was singing with the Johnny Otis show when she signed her first recording contract with Duke Peacock in 1951. She continued recording during the next decade, scoring her biggest success in 1953 with *Hound Dog*, a song that was to be an even bigger hit for Elvis Presley a year later.

Big Mama was known as Willie Mae until her first appearance at the Apollo Theater in New York City in 1952 when she was billed in a battle of the blues with "Little Esther." "Big Mama" Thornton was the victor—"Little Esther" didn't even get to sing in the first show.

Big Mama has performed at blues festivals here and abroad, appearing with B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Bobby "Blue" Bland, T-Bone Walker, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGee, Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson, Jay McShannon, and Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup, among others.

In 1956, Big Mama moved to the West Coast. Her sensational appearance at the Monterey Jazz Festival helped to bring about renewed interest in her art. She has since made several classic recordings, among them *Ball and Chain*. An original song by Big Mama, *Ball and Chain* proved a successful vehicle for Janis Joplin.



He's called "Bossman of the Blues" and "King of the Blues."

In over 30 years of performing, B.B. KING has recorded some 300 songs and more than 60 albums. In 1970 his album *The Thrill is Gone* went gold and his recent LPs have each sold over 300,000 copies. In terms of prizes, King has collected just about everything available: a Grammy (for *Thrill*), two gold records (*Thrill* and *Together for the First Time*), an honorary doctorate in music from Yale University and top blues awards from *Guitar Player*, *Down Beat* and *Ebony*. Trophies, medals and plaques crowd the shelves in his living room.

B.B. King was born Riley King 55 years ago on a plantation between Indianola and Itta Bena, Mississippi. When he was four years old his parents separated; at nine his mother was dead and he lived on a farm where he worked as a milkboy and general hand. His employers let him go to school during the rainy season or when work was slack, and B.B. managed to get through the ninth grade. A preacher uncle taught him to sing and play the guitar for church services and, at age 14, B.B. bought his first guitar. In 1947 he headed for Memphis, where he landed a job as a disc jockey and singer on radio station WDIA. He announced himself to his listeners as "The Boy from Beale Street." That quickly changed to "The Beale Street Blues Boy," then to "Blues Boy"—and finally to "B.B." People listened to him and liked what they heard. His radio show expanded to 2¼ hours daily and he began playing one-nighters in the Memphis area.

In 1949, B.B. recorded Lowell Fulson's *Three O'Clock Blues* for RPM Records. It was his first hit and climbed to the top of the rhythm and blues charts in 1950 and stayed there for 18 weeks. For the next few years he traveled, stopping first in Little Rock and later in Nashville. He also continued to cut records, took on a heavy load of one-night stands and attained a high artis-

tic standing (largely among Blacks) during the so-called "blues revival" of the late 1940s and early 1950s. But the blues were eclipsed in the early 1950s by rock 'n roll and B.B. had to hustle to make a living—in 1956 he played 342 one night stands.

B.B.'s fortunes began to improve as he caught the ear of white audiences. In 1958 he recorded *Sweet Sixteen*, which became the No. 1 R & B record in the nation. But his biggest successes were to come as people started getting roundabout exposure to his guitar style through the playing of artists like Larry Coryell, Eric Clapton and Mike Bloomfield. B.B.'s "debut" came in 1966 at San Francisco's Fillmore Auditorium. The enthusiastic reception he received there propelled him to Europe and a full schedule of festival and college dates. Since then he has been constantly on the move, playing six nights a week, year-round. In March 1979 he took the blues to the Soviet Union, and 100,000 people turned out to hear him.

B.B.'s message in blues is bold and in language not meant to be misunderstood. He writes the words for about 60% of his songs. Of his most characteristic and distinctive style, B.B. King feels that his vibrato and phrasing are the key elements. "My phrasing and using a trill on the left hand are the things I have developed. There weren't many people doing that when I started. My style is from a mixture of people I have idolized, like Blind Lemon, Robert Johnson, T-Bone Walker, Elmore James and Bukka White. Some of them used a slide, but I could never do that. The closest I could get to that sound was through trilling with my hand. That would make the notes sustain." In the late 1950's he also began punctuating phrases by "bending" notes. He would hit a note, press the string across the frets with his fingers to raise its pitch, and hang on. The frequent use of bent notes has also become one of his trademarks.

Trombonist **BENNY POWELL** is active in the Los Angeles area as an educator and arts administrator and has dedicated his pursuits to the preservation of jazz as a pure and vital American art form. Beginning his professional career as a musician at age 14, Powell has, over 35 years, played with the bands of Count Basie, Duke Pearson, Quincey Jones, Bill Berry, Bill Holman, Lionel Hampton, Thad Jones/Mel Lewis, Benny Goodman and Terry Gibbs. He has also performed and recorded with numerous small ensembles and is currently working with Merv Griffin's television orchestra. He has performed at many of the prestigious Jazz Festivals—Newport, Concord, Monterey, Montreaux—and participated in Duke Ellington's 80th Birthday Memorial Concert last year in UCLA's Royce Hall.

Powell has been a lecturer in the New York City public school system and has given seminars at UCLA, Jackson State University (Mississippi), Mt. San Antonio College and the West Covina Public School System. He serves on the advisory boards of a number of organizations, among them the National Association of Jazz Educators; the William Grant Still Community Arts Center; the Jazz Heritage Foundation; the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

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